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employment, trade unionism, labor disputes and adjustment, limitation of output, industrial insurance, housing, methods of promoting industrial peace, occupational hygiene, women in industry.

This should prove a convenient handbook to all persons interested in matters of personnel administration.

R. W. STONE

GOUCHER COLLEGE

The Turnover of Factory Labor. By SUMNER H. SLICHTER. With an Introduction by John R. Commons. New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1919. Pp. xiv+460. \$3.00.

The study of labor turnover is probably the most important development that has been made during the present generation in the field of labor problems. Dr. Slichter has produced the first comprehensive book on this subject. He has rendered a distinct service by collecting the scattered materials, adding to them the results of his own extensive investigations, and making an unusually keen analysis of the whole thing.

The study is made from the point of view of scientific management and is distinctly limited to that. The author explicitly avoids the question of unemployment in its relation to labor turnover, as well as the broad social policies, such as home ownership, which might have a relation to labor turnover. He limits his study to the factory. His question is, How can the rapid shifting of the labor force be reduced? His answer is, By scientific management in handling labor. By this answer he means that the relations between employers and employees must be put on a scientific basis. An employment department must be organized, wages must be based on merit, etc. Perhaps the most important point he makes in this connection is his emphasis on the necessity of considering the broader interests of labor. But no provision is made in this scheme for collective bargaining or any representation of labor in the determination of wages or promotion.

The study of the causes of labor turnover is made from the same point of view. This is the least satisfactory part of the book. The information was secured by asking men why they resigned, or by taking the reasons given by bosses and superintendents at the time of discharge. The author recognizes that this is but an approximation to the truth. But even if the employees or the bosses try to answer truthfully it is doubtful if they could give the information that is needed. There must be a careful "case study" before the causes of labor turnover are understood, and no superficial explanation in terms of more or less

plausible excuses of men who are resigning will serve as a basis either for the construction of labor policies in a factory or of the broader social policies.

There are some detailed questions regarding the definition and expression of labor turnover that may be raised. It is questionable whether labor turnover ought not be defined as replacements rather than separations if it is to be considered from the point of view of scientific management; it may be readily admitted that from the broader social point of view it ought to be defined as separations. It is questionable also whether absenteeism ought not to be taken into account in the expression of labor turnover, as Paul H. Douglas has suggested (*American Economic Review*, June, 1919, p. 402). It is questionable, also, whether there ought not to be an attempt made to determine the conditions in which labor turnover may be considered desirable, in contrast with the conditions in which it is undesirable.

E. H. SUTHERLAND

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The Joke About Housing. By CHARLES HARRIS WHITAKER.

Boston: Marshall Jones Co., 1920. Pp. vii+234. \$2.00.

Mr. Whitaker's book on *The Joke About Housing* is a serious work and it is to be regretted that the title is not in harmony with the earnest, far-reaching interpretation of the causes of the housing problem in America and its effects upon health, industry, and the whole mechanism of community development.

This book is symptomatic of a new tendency in America toward a constructive policy in housing reform. It indicates a realization of the social significance of housing as affecting the whole of the population of the United States, rather than an effort to bring about by restricting building regulations the improvement of the living conditions of a minority of the population who have become the victims of slum life. *The Joke About Housing* deals mainly with the relation of our land policies of ownership, land values, and land control, and the effect these policies had, not alone upon the freedom of land use in the development of adequate housing provisions, but in the tribute that land exacts from industry in the form of wages and from labor in depreciation of wage values.

The fundamental principles of land control advanced by the author are not new nor startling. The method of presentation, however, is not only novel and interesting but brings forth angles of vision of the land